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*President:* Mr. Han Seung-soo ..... (Republic of Korea)

*The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.*

**Agenda item 166** (*continued*)

**Measures to eliminate international terrorism**

**Report of the Secretary-General** (A/56/160 and Corr.1 and Add.1)

**Mr. Pradhan** (Bhutan): The General Assembly meets this year under exceptionally grave circumstances in New York to consider the agenda item on terrorism. Hence, allow me at the outset to join other speakers in thanking The Honourable Rudolph Giuliani, Mayor of New York, for having taken time from his exceedingly difficult and busy responsibilities and call of duty to make a historic visit to the United Nations and address the General Assembly. My delegation, like many others, was moved by his appeal to the international community to fight unambiguously against terrorism. The impact that he made was immense. We thank the Mayor for his outstanding leadership of our host city and the effective and humane manner in which he is conducting the rescue and recovery operations at ground zero. This is indeed the darkest hour in the history of our host city, and the Mayor's leadership has been nothing short of crucial.

At the start of our deliberations on terrorism, my delegation would like to once again convey the deepest condolences of the Government and the people of Bhutan to the Government and the people of the United States for the tragedy of 11 September. The terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon and the crash of the hijacked aeroplane in Pennsylvania have left all of us shocked and horrified.

It is gratifying that in these most trying of times, we, the Member States of the United Nations, are coming together and mobilizing our efforts in the fight against terrorism. While the international legal framework is being established and built upon, cooperation in intelligence, intensification of intelligence gathering, sharing and analysing information and timely pre-emptive action will go a long way in preventing terrorist acts. This is something we have to now undertake vigorously and with the greatest of unity.

Then there is the long-term war against terrorism. But the question is, how do we go about it? This is obviously a very difficult task and may even sometimes seem elusive. This war against terrorism, as the United States President, Mr. George W. Bush put it, has to be fought on several fronts.

One of the major fronts would be the fight against extremist beliefs and organizations that justify their violence and killings on the basis of political and, unfortunately, distorted religious grounds. Such justifications, again, regrettably attract support and sympathy among groups in some countries that may even subscribe to, aid and abet, maintain silence about or turn a blind eye to such activities in view of political or other pressures.

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When it comes to terrorism, we are most concerned with beliefs and mindsets involved in terrorist acts leading to the destruction of innocent lives and the peaceful functioning of the economic, social, cultural and political aspects of societies.

We are apprehensive that peaceful coexistence, a fundamental principle of the United Nations Charter and the Non-Aligned Movement, will be cast to the winds. We are concerned with the survival and the continuance of all of the world's civilizations that we cherish. We are worried that the economic development into which we are putting our hearts and minds in an effort to remove poverty, fight the worldwide scourge of HIV/AIDS and raise the living standards of our people will be seriously jeopardized. Above all, we subscribe to peaceful coexistence and tolerance. We demand no less from other nations and peoples.

The investigations carried out thus far by the United States and other countries and organizations reveal how deep the tentacles of terror have spread around the world. Its strength and reach, and more surprising, the human beings who are willing to indulge in such activities and sacrifice their own lives, seem to be growing by the day. This, without a doubt, is due to the inculcation of extremist beliefs through brainwashing. We were alarmed to learn of the so-called training camps in Afghanistan and other countries. How inhuman can one get?

Before the terrorist attacks on the United States, the Taliban bombarded to pieces the ancient Buddhist statues in Afghanistan, which were in fact a valuable cultural and historical legacy of the Afghan people themselves, and also of the world at large. The appeals by civilized people the world over, including many brotherly Muslim countries, called on the Taliban to respect the sentiments of Buddhists and the international community alike. But, as we all know, those appeals fell on deaf ears.

How can peaceful coexistence be possible in these circumstances? How can peaceful coexistence be possible when the distorted mindsets of some give them a sense of superiority over other people on the planet and cause them to work for their destruction? These are vital questions to which we need answers.

Although we have individually condemned the terrorist attacks and collectively adopted resolutions in both the Security Council and the General Assembly, this gives little or no solace to the thousands of victims, to those who have lost their near and dear ones, to those whose lives have been forever changed as a result of these heinous attacks.

What the international community must now demonstrate is the requisite political will and a renewed commitment to fight this menace. Today terrorists used jet aircraft as human-guided missiles; tomorrow, they will use chemical, biological or even nuclear weapons. These are weapons of mass destruction that will wipe out entire cities and populations. We must therefore undertake sustained and vigorous efforts for a comprehensive strategy to combat and eliminate such terrorism. Pre-emptive action based on sound information will be of the essence.

Bhutan has faced its own share of terrorism. Despite our limited resources, we have taken a firm stand against such activities. We have an adequate legal framework to deal with those who commit such crimes. We are increasing our capabilities to fight against this menace. Above all, the entire Bhutanese people, irrespective of ethnic or religious origin or background, have joined hands to fight against this scourge.

In our region of South Asia, terrorism has been rife for many years. Even we in the remote Himalayan mountains have not been spared. In an effort to counter it jointly, the seven countries of South Asia adopted the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism in 1987. Bhutan is a State party to that Convention.

In conclusion, allow me to end my presentation with a quotation from the sixteenth-century English poet John Donne, who put it so eloquently when he said:

> "No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main ... any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee."

**Mr. Zackheos** (Cyprus): I should like at the outset to reiterate my delegation's profound sorrow and sense of solidarity with the Government and the people of the United States in the face of this calamity which has befallen them, and to condemn unequivocally these criminal and barbaric acts, which we consider an attack on all of humanity. Our sympathy also goes to the

families of the victims and to all the countries whose nationals perished or are missing as a result of this heinous assault against the fundamental principles of civilization.

The date of 11 September will go down in history not only as a day of infamy but also as the day on which the international community was energized to tackle this scourge once and for all and eliminate it from the face of the Planet. To do so will require a long and sustained effort at all levels: national, regional and international. This multifaceted phenomenon can be attacked and contained only through effective action on many fronts. It is a phenomenon that transcends national borders, religions, cultures and civilizations. That is why it is imperative that it be addressed through a global and multilateral approach. The primary responsibility in the fight against terrorism undeniably lies with the United Nations, which, through the Security Council and the General Assembly, immediately responded to the shocking events of 11 September with determination, adopting the relevant resolutions of almost two weeks ago, and in particular Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), adopted last Friday.

The fight against terrorism must unite all humanity and cannot be allowed to fall victim to politicization or ephemeral considerations. Cyprus categorically rejects any such attempt and any tendency to equate terrorism with the Arab or Muslim world. In this respect, we commend the outstanding efforts of President George W. Bush to safeguard the culture of tolerance and multiculturalism which is the cornerstone of American society and the source of its strength.

The Government of Cyprus has aligned itself with the conclusions and plan of action of the extraordinary European Council meeting of 21 September, and my delegation also aligns itself with the statement made earlier in the debate by the Permanent Representative of Belgium on behalf of the European Union.

Cyprus fully shares the view of the European Union and others on the need for a global mobilization against terrorism under the auspices of the United Nations. We also agree with the European Union on the need for the international community to work in tandem to prevent and resolve regional conflicts such as the situation in the Middle East and in Cyprus. Resolving the Cyprus problem will restore stability in the eastern Mediterranean, usher in a new era of Greco-Turkish relations and thereby strengthen anti-terrorist efforts. We also support the integration of all countries into an equitable world system of security, prosperity and development as the precondition for a strong community for combating terrorism.

We reaffirm our commitment to join forces with all Governments in the struggle to eliminate the scourge of international terrorism. That determination has been explicitly stated at the highest level, with the assurance that all practical measures will be taken in cooperation with the international community and the obligations deriving from the relevant international treaties to which we have acceded. Cyprus has ratified or acceded to nine of the 12 international conventions pertaining to international terrorism, including the three basic conventions related to terrorism: the Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings; the Convention against the Taking of Hostages; and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents. It is, furthermore, one of the 44 signatories to the most recent Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, whose ratification will follow in the very near future.

Cyprus also supports the efforts for a comprehensive convention against terrorism, which would enhance the ability of the international community to respond more effectively to this ugly phenomenon. We hope that the negotiations currently under way within the context of the United Nations will be concluded soon, so that the General Assembly can take the necessary steps for its realization.

The terrorist attacks on 11 September were a wake-up call to us all. They brought into sharper focus, in the most brutal and horrific manner, our vulnerability and the indiscriminate nature of terrorism. This event dictated upon all of us the need to review security and other measures in existence. I wish to inform the Assembly that the Council of Ministers of Cyprus approved on 20 September a comprehensive proposal for the establishment of a task force to combat international terrorism, including illegal arms sales and brokerage. This unit will, inter alia, have the authority to investigate, upon information or suspicion, the activities, books and dealings of companies registered in Cyprus and the assets and accounts of any individual who might be involved in the sponsorship of terrorism, including, for example, illegal arms sales, financial involvement and transhipment. The unit will also have

the authority to take any action that might be deemed necessary, such as freezing assets and/or accounts, revoking company licences and confiscating cargoes.

In the murky world of terrorism, one of our major tasks is that related to its financing, which requires the constant vigilance of all countries to ensure that their financial institutions will not be allowed to be used by terrorist networks, which are often connected in one way or another to international criminal cartels, such as those involved in the drug trade and the trafficking of arms. Cyprus, cognizant of the dangers associated with its status as a major regional financial centre, has for many years now been actively engaged in establishing a strong anti-money-laundering regime. According to the United States Department of State *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*,

> "the Central Bank has in place a strict regulatory framework aimed at preventing abuses within the offshore sector".

The *Report* further notes the cooperation that exists between Cyprus and the United States in fighting this growing international phenomenon. Last year, the Financial Action Task Force conducted a review of Cyprus' anti-money-laundering regime against 25 specific criteria. Cyprus was not identified as a non-cooperative country in the fight against money laundering, while the *Report* clearly states that Cyprus has a comprehensive anti-money-laundering system.

I would also like to mention that, despite the size of our offshore banking sector, the Forum for Harmful Tax Practices of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, in a list of tax havens published in June last year, did not include Cyprus in that list. Furthermore, the International Monetary Fund, in its most recent report on its assessment of banking supervision in respect of the offshore sector, released in July of this year, commented positively on the situation in Cyprus.

In conclusion, we reiterate the determination of the Republic of Cyprus to support the universal fight against terrorism, which is nothing more than an assault on civilization with the purpose of sowing fear in our collective consciousness. We do so in the firm belief that, in order to safeguard civilization as we know it, it is imperative to stand shoulder to shoulder in this common struggle.

**Mr. Paolillo** (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): We have underestimated the capacity of terrorism to surreptitiously infiltrate our borders and our cities. We have underestimated its lethal and destructive power. We have underestimated the force with which hatred can lead a terrorist to commit acts of homicidal madness that know no limits. Today we are paying the consequences of our failure to foresee such things.

On 11 September, we began to see more clearly. We have not seen the face of the enemy, but we know that he can be identified. We do not know where to find him, but we know that he is among us. We do not know what it is that he seeks, but we know that he is ready to strike at any moment. On 11 September, we learned with astonishment the dark depths of criminal degradation to which terrorism can descend and the extent to which we are still unprepared to confront it.

Our goal now is to prevent the recurrence of other Black Tuesdays. We must eradicate terror from the face of the Earth. We must begin to act immediately, here and now. The measures recently adopted by the Security Council, and which Uruguay is committed to implementing, as well as the numerous conventions, declarations and resolutions we have already adopted, are but a part of the response. We must do much more. Individually or collectively through this Organization, we must, among other things, ratify or adhere to existing conventions on terrorism; promote strict compliance with the provisions of those conventions; and expedite the conclusion of the instruments to combat terrorism that are currently being negotiated with a view to ensuring their entry into force at an early date.

We must further consider the possibility of negotiating a convention to identify as an international crime, for which individuals are criminally liable, the knowledge or tolerance by Governments of terrorists or terrorist activities in their territories. We need to expand judicial cooperation in the field of terrorism through, inter alia, the reciprocal recognition of court awards on terrorism and to promote the adoption of national legislation on terrorism, establishing procedures and mechanisms for the identification, detention, prosecution and punishment of terrorists.

In countries that already have appropriate legislation, we should consider the possibility of imposing more severe penalties on the perpetrators of terrorist acts, excluding the death penalty. We must

simplify the procedures for the extradition of persons accused of terrorism and increase international cooperation to provide States with anti-terrorist techniques and strategies, including measures for the prevention of terrorism.

Within the structure of the United Nations, we need to establish a unit responsible for receiving, centralizing and disseminating information concerning terrorism, including information provided by Governments on the fulfilment of their international obligations in this area. In this respect, I wish to inform the Assembly that, last week, the States members of the Common Market of the South decided to create a permanent working group to organize and assess joint and coordinated actions of the four member States — Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay — against terrorism.

We must establish an obligation for States to transmit to the aforementioned unit all information on terrorists and terrorist activities and on the measures taken by the State to prevent or eliminate such activities, as well as on domestic legislative activities and on the discharge of international obligations and commitments undertaken in this area. We should also establish mechanisms for the strict monitoring of access by non-state actors to conventional weapons, weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and bacteriological weapons and so on.

*Mr. Botnaru (Republic of Moldova), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

In implementing these measures, we must bear in mind that our Governments have an enormous responsibility to protect their peoples from terrorism. We must therefore begin our work without delay so as to put an end as soon as possible to the era of terror.

**Mr. Zarif** (Islamic Republic of Iran): Terrorism is a global menace. The tragic events of 11 September indeed shocked and outraged the international community. They illustrated the scope and magnitude of our common vulnerability — the vulnerability of each and every one of us to the barbarism and inhumanity of a perverted response to injustice and exclusion.

Allow me at the outset to use the words of condemnation and sympathy of President Khatami in his message of 11 September:

> "On behalf of the Iranian Government and nation, I condemn the hijacking and terrorist attacks on public centres in American cities, which have killed a large number of innocent human beings. My deep sympathy goes out to the American nation, particularly those who have suffered from the attacks, and also to the families of the victims. Terrorism is doomed, and the international community should take effective measures in a bid to eradicate it."

Under these tragic circumstances, empathy is the only human response. We cannot but set aside our differences and share the pain and anguish of not only thousands of families who lost their loved ones, but an entire nation that has been traumatized by the terror of this crime. To feel emotional and angry is only human; but we need a great deal of collective reflection and wisdom for a rational and far-sighted response — a response that should focus not only on this horrific crime, but on terrorism in general, wherever and whenever it occurs and, more importantly, on the root causes of injustice and exclusion that can be exploited by demagogues to inflict so much harm on innocent human beings.

This requires vision, serious political will and the active participation and cooperation of all. As a global menace, terrorism needs a global response, founded on inclusion, fairness and international legitimacy. The response to a tragedy caused by blind hatred cannot be indiscriminate retribution, putting many innocent lives at risk; it should focus on bringing the culprits to justice. Terrorists should not be allowed to set the agenda or dictate our response.

Terrorism is a heinous product of the outdated paradigm of international relations. That paradigm was founded on the "will to power" and the arrogance that was associated with it, that is, that "might makes right". As might ruled, injustice prevailed and hatred flourished, and some who were dispossessed became inclined to resort to terror and violence. We must eradicate terrorism by changing the prevalent mentality that provided a fertile ground for the growth of this menace. All those who are serious about fighting terrorism, especially if they are in a position of global power, would be well advised not to resort to statements and policies emanating from emotions intertwined with the arrogance of power, which can only further entrench the mentality that produced terrorism.

The international community has been moving away from that paradigm to a new paradigm founded on equality, stakeholding and the dispersion of power. The purposes and principles set out in the United Nations Charter and the decision of the Assembly to designate this year as the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations reflect the will of the international community to move forward to this new paradigm. Allow me to quote from the final draft of a forthcoming book that has been prepared by a group of eminent persons selected by the Secretary-General to define the parameters of a new paradigm of dialogue among civilizations:

> "The existence of common dangers — indeed, terrorism — has created this equality in vulnerability that seems to beg as an answer a stronger adherence to common norms, common behaviour and common values, for the dangers we are talking about ... can only be minimized by a universal alliance of rules of behaviour and values.
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> "Dialogue brings with it equal footing ... as it is a process by which we accept, as much as we want to be accepted. We include, as much as we want to be included. We listen, as much as we want to be listened to.
>
> "In these terms, dialogue can perhaps eventually usher in a new paradigm of global relations because it challenges the old paradigm of hegemonism, the politics of power — in other words, of 'might makes right' ... dialogue can be a framework where the weakest is accorded the privilege to be listened to, and where the strongest finds it necessary to explain its case to others."

This Organization and this body provide a unique mechanism to mobilize the international community to address terrorism at its roots. My delegation fully concurs with the comments of the Secretary-General in his thoughtful editorial in *The New York Times* that

> "The United Nations ... provides the forum necessary for building a universal coalition, and can ensure global legitimacy for the long-term response to terrorism."

It is, indeed, an effective mechanism that can draw upon the resources and capabilities of each and every Member State within a rule-based and non-discriminatory framework, thus forging an international consensus in the fight against terrorism.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is fully prepared to participate in and contribute actively to a global campaign against terrorism led by the United Nations. In his letter of 16 September to the Secretary-General, President Khatami proposed that comprehensive and inclusive negotiations should commence to articulate practical and serious global policies and strategies to eradicate the menace of terrorism. He also called for the convening of a global summit, at the earliest possible date, to register and demonstrate the highest international political will to root out terrorism.

In our view, the General Assembly should consider a multifaceted approach to terrorism, which should include, as one of its major components, a comprehensive legal framework. In this context, we need to articulate objective criteria which would enable the international community to identify and combat terrorism, regardless of who the victims or culprits may be. Legitimacy, as well as the sustainability of the global struggle against terrorism, rests on applying a single set of standards to all. It is not acceptable that patterns of alliance, rather than actual engagement in terrorist activities, should become the determining factor. Thus the credibility of the campaign against terrorism is seriously undermined when policies and practices designed to instil terror and fear among the entire Palestinian people receive acquiescing silence, while resistance to foreign occupation and State terrorism is conveniently demonized.

A comprehensive legal framework should also include appropriate guidelines for a rational and rule-based approach across the board, so that no terrorist, no matter where he or she commits his or her acts of terror, can find refuge, a source of support, financing or recruitment in any member of the international community.

We believe that the General Assembly Ad Hoc Committee and the Sixth Committee Working Group should speed up their efforts to prepare the necessary legal documents for adoption by the proposed global summit. The draft comprehensive convention on combating international terrorism is certainly one of the appropriate documents that could be considered by the Ad Hoc Committee and the Working Group. We should endeavour to arrive at a consensus on the key

issues of the proposed convention and pave the way for its adoption.

But the work of the General Assembly on legal frameworks should not lead us to lose sight of fundamental issues of conflict prevention and appropriate political, social and economic strategies to address the mentality that breeds terrorism, as well as the root causes that nurture it.

Terrorism has no religion, no nationality or ethnic background. It is indeed the negation of everything religions stand for. Attempts to attribute the recent acts of terror and violence even to a misguided interpretation of Islam are not only dangerous, but utterly false. Intolerance, extremism and violence have no place in Islam or among its adherents. We must not purport to accord any legitimacy to these acts by associating them with even a misguided reading of Islam, a religion which categorically condemns the killing of a single innocent human being, equating it with genocide against entire mankind. The leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in his speech of 17 September, clearly articulated the Islamic position, when he said:

> "killing of innocent people, in any place and with any type of weapon, be it long-range missiles or nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, carried out by any organization, country or individual, is categorically rejected and condemned."

More recently, in his speech of 26 September, Ayatollah Khamenei articulated that fighting against terrorism is a religious responsibility of all Muslims, amounting to jihad, and called on the Islamic world to take the lead in a serious and comprehensive campaign to eradicate terrorism. Muslim scholars from across the Islamic world have taken similar positions.

It is a source of deep concern that the events of 11 September have given rise to a new wave of Islamophobia and bigotry against Muslims and Arabs. Disturbing trends have surfaced to bring about a clash among civilizations and prevent the realization of dialogue at the national and international levels. The recent event should not be utilized to further stimulate chronic cultural and political misperceptions, misconceptions, stereotypes and prejudices. Furthermore, the abuse of this catastrophe, exemplified by the portraying of an artificial clash between Islam and the West and the increasing suppression of the Palestinian people by Israel, would only exacerbate and aggravate its bitter and inhuman dimensions and implications.

Allow me to conclude by quoting again from the draft work of the Group of Eminent Persons of the United Nations Dialogue among Civilizations:

> "The tragic terrorist attacks of 11 September make the call for a dialogue among civilizations even more compelling ... Whether we are moving towards a clash of civilizations or towards greater human solidarity against those who murder innocents only because they are different is really up to each of us. The choice is neither predetermined nor unavoidable; that is why each of us individually chooses and takes personal responsibility. We can let the small minority take over and throw us into continuous conflict at all levels; or we can enlarge the coalition of those who respect each other's dignity and common humanity, who value the life of our family members as well as the life of our fellow human beings on the other side of the planet."

**Mr. Margoaela** (Lesotho): The events of 11 September have shocked and saddened us all. While these horrendous terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon and in Pennsylvania were carried out on American soil, their effects have touched all members of the international community and immediately galvanized the legislative organs of the United Nations to pass General Assembly resolution 56/1 and Security Council resolution 1368 (2001) just a day after the events. We are thus grateful for the convening of these meetings at this difficult time and join other peace-loving nations around the world in offering our deepest sympathies to the Government and people of the United States and in particular to all victims and the families of those who lost their lives. Our heartfelt sympathies also go to the families of all other nations that lost citizens in these attacks.

We pay tribute to all those who dauntlessly carried out rescue efforts amidst such devastation. Throughout this ordeal, the American people have shown their resilience as they embark on rebuilding and reassuring terror-stricken citizens of their safety, as well as guarding against further attacks.

Sometimes opportunities present themselves in unique — and often painful — ways. However painful the events of the last three weeks have proven to be, they have presented an opportunity for the international

community to unite with a view to putting an end to the scourge of terrorism. There can be no justification for unprovoked attacks on innocent civilians. The international community needs to strengthen the rule of law to counter terrorism so that all those who initiate, organize and perpetrate these acts, as well as those who aid, support, finance and/or assist these cowardly acts can be held accountable. Since criminal acts of terror do not respect boundaries, enforcement of criminal law against them cannot be the exclusive competence of States.

In this regard, it is worth noting that a new institution, the soon to be established International Criminal Court, will be able to prosecute the kind of crime against humanity carried out three weeks ago. This Court will be merely part of the bigger project for establishing international peace and criminal justice by punishing grave violations of law such as the ones we have just witnessed.

These vicious attacks against innocent civilians from more than 80 countries underscore the need for international cooperation for the early establishment of an international criminal justice institution that will bring justice by holding accountable individuals who target innocent civilians, in complete disregard of humanitarian standards of warfare. All States should therefore extend practical cooperation to the machinery of international criminal justice if we are to eliminate indiscriminate violence against innocent people.

But, of course, there are many more ways to fight terrorism, whenever and by whomsoever it is committed. Terrorism is not only a global menace; it is also a threat to international peace and security. No country can hope to win the war against terrorism alone; hence, enhanced international cooperation remains indispensable if we are to succeed in this war.

The Security Council has once again demonstrated its determination to fight terrorism by unanimously passing resolution 1373 (2001). Full implementation of this resolution is of utmost importance. The General Assembly should urgently endorse the expanded mandate of the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the Centre for International Crime Prevention and provide the Branch with the necessary resources to enable it to carry out its mandate efficiently and effectively.

In the wake of the earlier attacks on the United States embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, as well as the 11 September attacks, it is now evident that terrorist groups will stop at nothing to achieve their goals of winning attention by the very atrocity of their tactics. Our efforts to fight this faceless enemy are constrained by the fact that terrorist groups do not possess a visible economy, land area or identified population; hence, they are less vulnerable to international sanctions. Advances in technology have also made it difficult to trace their covert networks and to police false documents and transhipment through bogus companies. Raising public awareness of the nature and scope of international terrorism and its relationship to organized crime and drug trafficking, among other things, has thus become the international community's urgent priority.

Now that we live in a world where terrorist acts of violence have become commonplace, it is no longer far-fetched nor far off for terrorists groups to acquire and use weapons of mass destruction with devastating consequences for our world order. The indiscriminate nature of these weapons and their extraordinary range of destruction multiplies the challenges and threats we are facing.

The Ad Hoc Committee established by the General Assembly to frame an international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism has over the years endeavoured without success to resolve the outstanding issues relating to the draft convention. The conclusion of negotiations on this convention and its submission to the General Assembly at this session have now become imperative.

A number of international anti-terrorist conventions that empower national courts to prosecute or extradite terrorist suspects have been concluded over the years. However, like all laws, a treaty without enforcement becomes useless. Universal adherence to these instruments is essential for the fight against terrorism, but unfortunately, most of these important conventions have remained a dead letter; hence the urgent need to take steps to raise awareness about these instruments, to encourage States to sign and ratify them and to provide assistance, where needed, for their implementation.

Consolidation of all international instruments on terrorism with a view to closing all existing gaps and loopholes will be necessary to enable law enforcement agencies to effectively cooperate and to enable national courts to investigate and prosecute these crimes. It is

thus imperative for the Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly resolution 51/210 to complete its negotiations on a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism and to submit the convention to the General Assembly for adoption.

The need to finalize the question of convening a high level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate a joint organized response of the international community to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations has now become urgent. The Sixth Committee should finalize this issue at the current session and submit its recommendations to this Assembly without further delay.

Lesotho fully supports all efforts of the international community to combat and eliminate international terrorism. As we refine our strategies for an effective response to terrorism, we must be careful not to violate human rights and international law. Our efforts must preserve the distinction between the guilty and the innocent, between the perpetrators and the civilians and between those who commit atrocities and those who simply share their religious beliefs, ethnicity or national origin. If we allow these distinctions to be blurred and if we abandon the basic principles of law, then we will descend to the level of perpetrators, even while purporting to seek justice. The logic of terrorism is that the ends justify the means, but in our fight against terrorism, the ends cannot justify the means. We must continue to uphold the principles that terrorism seeks to destroy: to strengthen democracy and promote its core values and principles, to respect international law and prevent violence and crimes against humanity. This is the way to deny the perpetrators of this crime their ultimate victory.

**Mr. Dauth** (Australia): The Australian people are shocked and outraged at the heinous attacks on the United States on 11 September. These attacks and the catastrophic loss of life, injury and destruction are utterly repugnant and inhumane. They can never be justified and must never be repeated. It is incumbent upon all of us to take definitive action to bring the perpetrators of these attacks to justice.

The United Nations has a critical role to play in ensuring that all Member States cooperate in taking the necessary steps to combat international terrorism. We fully support the measures and strategies outlined in Security Council resolutions 1368 (2001) and 1373 (2001). We urge all States to take immediate steps to comply with these resolutions.

Last week, the Prime Minister of Australia announced far-reaching measures to freeze the financial assets of terrorists and terrorist groups. We are now looking at what further measures are necessary to give full effect to Security Council resolution 1373 (2001).

Effective implementation and enforcement of the United Nations-sponsored anti-terrorist conventions will create a formidable international legal regime that will starve terrorists of funds and ensure that those involved in terrorist activities are swiftly brought to justice. We must all work relentlessly to ensure that these conventions have a real and abiding impact.

Australia is party to nine of the 12 United Nations-sponsored anti-terrorism conventions. We are now taking steps to become a party to the remaining conventions as a matter of priority.

This existing framework of subject-specific conventions can, however, be strengthened. The conclusion of a comprehensive convention against terrorism which supplements the existing conventions would strengthen and broaden the international law framework. Therefore, we believe negotiations on the comprehensive convention against international terrorism should be concluded without delay. Australia is determined to work towards this end at the forthcoming meeting of the working group. There can be no doubt that there is a need for such a convention now. We should all commit to making the adoption of this convention one of the key objectives of this General Assembly.

We know that the battle against international terrorism will not be easy or quick. It will require determination and patience, dedication and vigour — a concerted and united approach by us all. Australia's commitment to this common endeavour is — and will continue to be — steadfast and unwavering.

**Mr. Kastrup** (Germany): The eleventh of September has changed the international agenda. The struggle against terrorism has become a top priority for all of us.

The criminal attacks in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania have challenged us as members of the civilized world. The unprecedented, faceless and barbaric acts were directed against the very fabric that

unites humanity: respect for human life and human dignity, the values of liberty, tolerance, democracy and the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

We welcome wholeheartedly the swift reaction by the General Assembly, and we fully stand by the Security Council, which stated in its resolution 1368 (2001) that the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington were a threat to international peace and security, thus meeting the conditions under international law for resolute action against the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of the attacks. Against the backdrop of the terrorist threat, Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) has sent out a remarkably vigorous signal of strength. We have already begun, jointly with our partners in the European Union and at the national level, to implement it.

My Belgian colleague yesterday discussed the European Council's landmark declaration of 21 September, which takes a holistic approach to the scourge of terrorism. Indeed, the European Union proposes to integrate as many countries as possible in a worldwide system of security and prosperity. Designing and implementing a comprehensive political, social and developmental strategy for regional conflict prevention must now be, more than ever, a priority on the international agenda. This includes the creation of a basis for political and economic stabilization for the regions of crisis in the Middle East and Central Asia.

Germany will adopt all necessary measures, at the national, European and international levels, to combat terrorism. We shall improve the efficiency of our struggle against terrorism, inter alia, through amendments to criminal law, through optimizing the safety of air traffic both on the ground and in the air and through measures to seek out and to disrupt the financial structures of terrorists. Our police continue to work, together with the American Federal Bureau of Investigation, to dismantle a terrorist network which established footholds in Germany, in other European countries and in the United States, abusing their freedoms and their hospitality. Our intelligence services have done a good job thus far combating international terrorism, also with regard to disclosing terrorist financial structures. Their investigations also brought about the arrest of Osama bin Laden's then-finance chief.

Our struggle against terrorism is a defence of our open and free society and will be conducted with full respect for the rule of law. Terrorism will not induce us to abandon the very values we defend. It will not stop us from passing a modern immigration law aimed at the integration of foreigners. My country is aware, as much as other countries are, that now is the time for decent people to unite against hate and violence, regardless of their origins, their race or their creed. In a statement to the German Parliament on 19 September, Federal Chancellor Schroeder was unequivocal in stating that the attacks in New York and Washington have nothing to do with religion. They are the expression of a criminal mindset. Islamic States and religious communities, too, have been and are targeted by this indiscriminate terrorism. There must be no doubt that there is no political or religious justification for terrorist violence. What we are confronted with is not, and should not be perceived as, a clash of civilizations. What we are confronted with is the terrorists' clash with civilization.

The United Nations is uniquely positioned to coordinate and to invigorate the international response to terrorism. In the face of terrorist violence, hate and chaos, the United Nations is called upon to demonstrate that a world in which humanity can live free from fear and want is not only a common aspiration, but an achievable goal. The Millennium Declaration has laid out the way to go. The peaceful resolution of conflicts, the rule of law, the promotion of sustainable development, equitable distribution of the benefits of globalization and poverty eradication are indispensable landmarks. We trust that the Security Council and the General Assembly will live up to their responsibilities in this regard. Failure to do so would seriously compromise the credibility of the Organization.

The United Nations must engage its full potential to identify and eventually eradicate the deeper roots of terrorism. We must work on the full and timely implementation of the plan of action adopted during the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, hosted by the European Union in Brussels in May. We must ensure the success of the International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Monterrey next spring, and we must strive for a successful, development-oriented round of the World Trade Organization in Doha in November.

There is, in our view, a clear opportunity for negotiations on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism to be brought to a successful conclusion, if a spirit of compromise and a sense of common purpose prevail in the Sixth Committee. In a number of areas, the convention would offer a significant added value to existing conventions.

We should also accelerate our pace towards the establishment of the International Criminal Court, as a timely response to combat impunity for crimes such as those perpetrated on 11 September. Mary Robinson was right in characterizing these crimes as crimes against humanity. The Security Council made a pertinent call for maximum adherence to the existing anti-terrorist conventions. Germany, for its part, has signed all 12 conventions, has ratified 10 and is in the process of ratifying, as a matter of urgency, the two remaining ones. Irrespective of the date of ratification, we are already implementing all United Nations conventions in full.

More than ever, the United Nations is called upon to uphold the values of tolerance, dignity and social justice through concrete action and through the promotion of a dialogue among and within civilizations. And the plight of all those who suffer from terrorism must be addressed. This includes notably the people of Afghanistan. They should know that the entire world will assist them in building a better, more humane and more prosperous future, once they have escaped the vicious circle of oppression and misery. I invite the Assembly to work with us to convey this message also through the resolutions on "Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan and the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security", of which Germany has been and will continue to be the main sponsor.

My delegation stands ready to cooperate with other delegations in living up to the high expectations that the world is now placing on the United Nations.

**Mr. de Saram** (Sri Lanka): The Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka regrets that he is unable, because of other pressing commitments, to be here to address the General Assembly on the subject of terrorism. He has requested me to read to the Assembly on his behalf the statement he would have made. I have now the honour to do so. It reads as follows:

"On behalf of the delegation of Sri Lanka, I convey to the President warmest congratulations on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly. To his predecessor, Mr. Harri Holkeri, I would also convey Sri Lanka's appreciation for the careful and devoted manner in which he presided over the affairs, and the extremely busy schedule, of the fifty-fifth session of the Assembly.

"The horrors of the morning of Tuesday, 11 September, the spectacle of international terrorism in action, viewed live on television screens the world over, has cast a heavy pall on all of us and on humanity as a whole.

"We are all still deeply moved by what happened in the United States that tragic morning. We will always be affected by the memories we shall carry with us for as long as we live.

"The President, the Government and the people of Sri Lanka have conveyed to the President, the Government and the people of the United States, and all those bereaved, Sri Lanka's profound condolences. On behalf of the delegation of Sri Lanka, I would also today convey to the delegation of the United States the very deepest of sympathies.

"The terrorism of 11 September, so shocking as it was, gave rise to a coming together of the people of this great city of New York in the finest traditions of humanity.

"On 12 September, the Security Council and the General Assembly convened to express their collective condolences; an unqualified condemnation of the terrorism; a determination that those responsible should not go unpunished; and firm concurrence that terrorism threatened the foundations of human society and order and would need to be, and must be, globally removed.

"Let us hope that such a deep sense of the togetherness of all of humanity at times of great crises will continue to be pervasive.

"To ensure that those responsible for the terror of 11 September are brought to justice and are deprived of their support and their resources, whatever and wherever that may be, is a matter of immediate urgency.

"Sri Lanka has assured the Government of the United States of every possible assistance Sri Lanka could provide.

"Terrorism is, sadly, no stranger to Sri Lanka. We in Sri Lanka know terrorism, unfortunately, only too well.

"We know the horrific direct consequences of an act of terrorism: the carnage; the horror; the thousands of unsuspecting innocent lives lost or maimed, in the flash of an explosion; the thousands of families then left bereaved; the countless personal tragedies that terrorism leaves in its wake.

"There are also the larger disruptions of national stability and order — of the economy, of infrastructures, of the customary ways of life.

"Yet we must not forget the elaborate funding, support, and preparation — in a word, the logistics — that lie behind a single act of terrorism: the extensive secret collection organizations, their associates, their collectors, their enforcers, their many other supporters, misguided or otherwise; the ability to transfer millions, perhaps just by word of mouth; the numerous connections to the underworld of crime; the deliberate fanning of the flames of difference or discord in societies into the fanatical hatred from which crucible a suicide mission is born; and above it all there looms the reclusive leader who attracts and directs the misguided and the impressionable.

"The elimination of the supportive financial systems on which terrorism depends must, in Sri Lanka's view, be a principal objective, and that will require a global undertaking — complex, difficult, multifaceted and long-term.

"However, because of the events of 11 September, important beginnings are now being made for that purpose, beginnings which, hopefully, will be of assistance as well to those of us who have known the heavy hand of terrorism for many years past.

"May I recall here my words delivered almost exactly a year ago to the Millennium Assembly about Sri Lanka's experience with terrorism:

"'A criminal organization — whether involved in rebellion against a State or not — must depend for its sustenance outside the law. For its massive operations, and massive weaponry, massive collections of funds are continually required. As funds available for criminal activities within a State, especially a developing State, are inevitably small, and the monitoring of their collection and disbursement relatively simple, fund-collection for such activities is carried out abroad — through international criminal networks, of course — and also, as in all criminal enterprises, through knowing or unknowing front organizations or other entities that now proliferate in many forms, in many countries — often in the guise, sadly, of charitable groups or groups ostensibly concerned with human rights or ethnic, cultural or social matters.'

"I also said:

"'The magnitude of the collection of funds abroad ... and the extensiveness of the reach of the international networks developed for that purpose, boggle the mind. Their receipts seem to exceed the receipts of many transnational conglomerates — all free of tax. Revenues come, of course, from the customary illegal trade in drugs, arms or other merchandise, including the smuggling of humans.

"'But there also exists a far more abundant and seemingly limitless reservoir of funds — namely, expatriates of similar ethnicity settled abroad. As the western media has reported over the past few years from time to time, collections from expatriates abroad for the armed group known as the Tamil Tigers, which is battling the Government of Sri Lanka, are staggering in their magnitude: for example, $400,000 a month from one country; $600,000 a month from another, $2.7 million a month from yet another; and large additional funds from expatriates in still other countries.' (*A/55/PV.21, p. 26*)

"Let me recall also the following sentences from a report submitted by the Secretary-General

in 1997, which often come to our minds in Sri Lanka:

> "'Government authority and civil society are increasingly threatened by transnational networks of crime, narcotics, money-laundering and terrorism. Access by underworld groups to sophisticated information technologies and weaponry as well as to the various instrumentalities through which the global market economy functions are vastly increasing the potential power and influence of these groups, posing a threat to law and order and to legitimate economic and political institutions.' (*A/51/950, para. 143*)

"The many disparate forces of international terrorism do not come together in one monolithic whole. They are variously interconnected in numerous ways, and their international networks are extensive. They are mutually supportive and communicate through the global underworld of crime when special missions are afoot. If international terrorism is ever to be removed from our midst, we must begin with the recognition that international terrorism is a form of global criminality. We must not let ourselves be deceived by the artfully crafted cloaks and mantles of false pretensions. It is the method of terrorism — the murder of innocent civilians and the defiance of the sanctity of life — that defines terrorism.

"The eradication of such a global criminal phenomenon requires a global governmental and non-governmental endeavour in many fields.

"There will have to be numerous bilateral, subregional, interregional and global governmental and non-governmental arrangements.

"To such a global endeavour, this Organization, the United Nations, must contribute. The United Nations is no stranger to the development and administration of global programmes.

"One of the magnificent achievements of the Organization in the last half century has been the transformation that has taken place in global opinion on the relationship that should obtain between the governing and the governed, between the Government and the citizen. It was on the basis of the moral authority of the General Assembly's Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the determined endeavours of the Commission on Human Rights, that this transformation was achieved. The dignity of the individual has now — largely as a result of United Nations leadership in the field of human rights — been placed, as it should be, among the primary priorities of national and international attention.

"The achievement is due, in large part, to the remarkable multifaceted and powerful structure that has been developed within the United Nations system of organizations and agencies over the past 50 years for the protection and promotion of human rights. We know of the large number of general multilateral conventions that were concluded. We are acquainted with their reporting requirements and monitoring committees. We know of the many special rapporteurs. There are training programmes and centres on human rights. We have had special sessions of the General Assembly and special conferences. Numerous trust funds supplement and often exceed the allocations from the regular budget of the United Nations. There is an enormous public relations programme on human rights. There is a High Commissioner for Human Rights. The list of United Nations entities that make human rights one of their major concerns could go on, and they would still not include the hundreds of governmental and non-governmental national and international groups that are themselves engaged in the protection and advancement of human rights, and we have not as yet come to the international and national print and electronic media.

"If only such a powerful edifice would turn its attention to the eradication of the horrors of terrorism that afflict so many in developed and developing countries alike.

"Moreover, let us remember in this connection that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is not limited in scope to ensuring the observance of human rights by Governments alone.

"The Declaration has a far wider purpose: the observance of human rights by all — governmental and non-governmental alike. One need only look to the explicit prescription in article 3 of the Universal Declaration, which requires that everyone has the right to life, and to the provisions of article 30, which prescribe:

> "'Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.'

"An act of terrorism by a non-governmental entity against civilians is surely one of the most heinous violations of the human rights of its victims and, surely, a crime against humanity as well.

"Sri Lanka pledges to follow closely, and cooperate fully in, the work of the United Nations on terrorism. Sri Lanka will, of course, do so pursuant to the resolutions of the Security Council, and in particular resolution 1373 (2001), adopted by the Security Council last Friday night, 28 September.

"Sri Lanka will also follow closely and cooperate fully with such other United Nations programmes against terrorism as shall, hopefully, also develop within the United Nations system, in the knowledge that it is the prevention of the terrorist's strike that should be the principal focus of a global endeavour against terrorism, and that fundamental to such prevention is the interdiction of terrorism's life-blood, the provision of funds made available in millions — knowingly or unknowingly, wilfully or otherwise, directly or indirectly, overtly or covertly — in circumstances in which it is possible that such funds may be utilized to further terrorism's purpose.

"It is surely morally unacceptable in contemporary times, whether there be specific legal provision in international conventions to that effect or not, that funds should flow in their millions — or tens of millions, would perhaps be more exact — from territories under the jurisdiction of one State for the slaughter of innocents in another.

"Sri Lanka will, of course, continue in its active role as the Chair of the General Assembly's Ad Hoc Committee on the elimination of international terrorism, established by resolution 51/210, which was reconvened in February 2001, with a view to concluding, under the auspices of the Sixth Committee, international conventions on particular aspects of terrorism and eventually developing an appropriate comprehensive and focused international legal framework in the light of which Governments would bring to justice those who are responsible for acts of terrorism.

"The world before 11 September was not always encouraging to the Ad Hoc Committee. Two examples should suffice to make that point: the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, adopted by the General Assembly on 9 December 1999, shows as of now only 44 signatories and just four States parties, of which Sri Lanka is one; the International Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, adopted by the General Assembly, on 15 November 2000, shows as of now 123 signatories and just three States parties.

"We know also that our negotiations on international conventions, which often conclude, after lengthy and exhaustive sessions, with lowest-common-denominator provisions leavened by 'constructive ambiguity', have not been as effective as they ought to be. They may salve our consciences, but they contain loopholes through which millions of dollars could pass in questionable transactions in the real world.

"Yet that was the world we knew before 11 September. Let us hope that things will now change for the better.

"Sri Lanka, a party to all the major United Nations conventions relating to terrorism, will continue to urge the widest possible participation in the international conventions that have already been formulated under the auspices of the United Nations on a number of aspects of terrorism. Sri Lanka will also pursue the fullest possible participation in the formulation of the conventions that remain on the agenda of the Ad Hoc Committee on the elimination of international terrorism."

**Mr. Dragonov** (Bulgaria) (*spoke in French*): I wish first of all to convey my congratulations to His Excellency Mr. Han Seung-soo on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session and to wish him all success in his important mission. I also pay tribute to the President of the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session, His Excellency Mr. Harri Holkeri, who enhanced the effectiveness of our work.

My deepest condolences go to the families of the victims of the barbarous 11 September attacks, among whom were citizens of many of the countries represented in this Hall. Bulgaria is full of admiration for the outstanding courage of New Yorkers and of the entire people of the United States at this difficult moment.

Bulgaria has already associated itself with the European Union statement on terrorism; today I should like to highlight a number of points on behalf of my country.

We are convened at New York for the first session since the adoption of the historic Millennium Declaration. But this is also a tragic moment marked by events that pose an unprecedented challenge to the international community and to civilization itself.

In the aftermath of the 11 September terrorist attacks against the United States, terrorism may be seen more than ever as a global threat to world order, peace and security. Clearly, terrorism undermines the very foundations of modern society, which is founded on the values of democracy, humanism and freedom. Hence, our present debate does not deal solely with the fight against terrorism. We are discussing a deliberate attack on what the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, has called

> "our shared values [and] everything this Organization stands for: ... the very idea of a united human family". (*A/56/PV.7*)

It was an attack against mankind, and mankind must therefore unite to conquer the forces that launched it.

We are convinced that the proper response would include the creation of a global system against terrorism. The United Nations must formulate a targeted and effective mechanism to find legitimate ways and means to prevent terrorism and to track down and punish terrorists, along with all those who support or back them. Bulgaria believes that terrorism in any form or manifestation is inadmissible, but it believes no less firmly that no region, nation or religion in the world should be singled out. The scourge of terrorism threatens all the world's societies and countries irrespective of religion, belief or ethnicity. The commitment of States and Governments from all cultural and geographic regions to act firmly against terrorism must be at the heart of the global response. As an irreplaceable forum for formulating a long-term strategy, the United Nations has a unique role to play in effecting that response.

The Republic of Bulgaria has consistently condemned all forms of terrorism without exception, whether they are national or international in origin, including those that seek legitimacy in political, religious, ethnic or social arguments. My country strictly adheres to the norms and principles set out in the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism adopted in 1994 by the Assembly by resolution 49/60 and reaffirmed in Security Council resolution 1269 (1999). Bulgaria unequivocally stands by the United Nations in its support for the common international effort and in its condemnation of the recent terrorist attacks, which may have targeted one nation but which wounded the entire world.

In a solemn declaration, the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria voiced its firm support for the establishment of a global coalition against terrorism. The parliamentary declaration states my country's support for joint efforts to combat terrorism and recognizes that the fight against terrorism will be a long-term priority.

Bulgaria welcomed the Security Council's adoption of its resolution 1368 (2001), which condemned terrorism in the wake of the 11 September attacks, with great satisfaction. In our view, Council resolution 1373 (2001), which was adopted soon afterward, forcefully reaffirms the spirit of earlier Council resolutions and of the 12 universal conventions against terrorism. Because of its binding, obligatory nature, it constitutes a major step forward.

This resolution strikes in particular at the financing of terrorism and spells out with unprecedented clarity the obligations of States in this area. Funding is at the heart of every war, including that which terrorism is waging against humankind. Drying up sources of financing is a task that will involve daily coordination and cooperation among

States at all levels — national, subregional, regional and international.

Bulgaria notes with satisfaction that resolution 1373 (2001) recognizes the serious nature of the symbiosis that exists between terrorism and organized crime. My country deems it of the highest priority that the follow-up mechanism to the resolution functions effectively, and it intends to make its full contribution to that end.

We believe it imperative to create a clear, specific and consistent legal framework for the international war on terrorism. As stated in resolution 1373 (2001), it is urgent that all States Members of the United Nations become active parties to United Nations conventions in this field.

For its part, Bulgaria has now acceded to 13 conventions, including all of those dealing with air safety as well as the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials. On 19 March 2001, the Republic of Bulgaria signed the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, adopted by the General Assembly on 9 December 1999. All necessary legal procedures towards its ratification are now under way, so that Bulgarian legislation can be brought into line with that Convention. All of the procedures for the early ratification of the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings have also been undertaken.

In conclusion, I should like to reaffirm Bulgaria's commitment to acting together with Member States to forge a consensus against all forms of terrorism. We fervently believe that the United Nations must play a pivotal role in this respect. As an active and responsible Member of our universal Organization, Bulgaria is ready to shoulder its responsibilities in the quest to create a safer and more prosperous world.

**Mr. Baja** (Philippines): The terrorist attacks of 11 September were attacks on us all. We, as one indivisible human family, cannot allow the scourge of international terrorism to stand, first, because it is cowardly and deliberately indiscriminate, as it targets innocent and defenceless civilians; secondly, because it is inhuman — a crime against humanity — and violates the right of human beings to go about their daily lives; and, thirdly, because it is ineffective and senseless, for, instead of intimidating us, it strengthens our resolve to combat the viciousness of a few and to join together in rooting out this menace and bringing its perpetrators to justice.

International terrorism is an aberration in the political framework of global cooperation. It thwarts the aspiration of the international community to achieve a world of peace, harmony, equality and charity. The irony was not lost on us that the attacks came when the United Nations was observing the International Day of Peace and was poised to open the fifty-sixth session of the Assembly, whose key goals are to stanch conflict and promote peace and prosperity.

The Philippines itself has been the victim of terrorist acts in the past, and Filipino lives were lost in the 11 September tragedy. We condemn in unequivocal terms international terrorism, its perpetrators and its network of supporters and sympathizers. We will actively join efforts to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, for terrorism is a threat to every society and nation.

Our strong and unwavering stand against terrorism commits us to the responsibility clearly articulated by the President of the Philippines, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. In a policy speech last 26 September, President Arroyo announced the following courses of action to manifest Philippine solidarity with the global war against terrorism.

First, the Philippines will join the international counter-terrorism coalition.

Secondly, we will work closely with the United Nations and other members of the coalition on intelligence and security matters concerning terrorism.

Thirdly, if and when required, the Philippines will make available its airspace and other facilities as transit or staging points.

Fourthly, the Philippines is prepared to contribute logistical support to the coalition in the form of food supplies, medicines and medical personnel.

Fifthly, the Philippines, if asked and upon fulfilment of its constitutional and legal requirements, will provide combat troops to the coalition.

And sixthly, the Philippines will prevent the flow of funds to terrorist groups, particularly those operating in the country. Last Saturday, President Arroyo signed the newly enacted Philippine law against money laundering. Let this attest to our resolve to fight

terrorism on all fronts, in response to Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), which the Council adopted last Friday, 28 September.

The impact of our involvement in the war against terrorism will be measured to a great degree by our own achievements in defeating terrorism within our territorial boundary.

We are addressing our own home-grown terrorist group with full determination. Since our President announced last July an intensified crackdown against the Abu-Sayyaf group, more than 150 people have been arrested or have surrendered, many of them ranking members. We will not relent in this campaign.

In a few weeks, the General Assembly, through a working group of the Sixth Committee, will resume negotiations on a comprehensive convention against international terrorism. These negotiations will be a crucial test of our resolve to strengthen international cooperation against this evil.

We cannot afford to fail this test. We should build upon past successes, from the first legally binding Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft, adopted almost four decades ago, and through the 12 existing international conventions and various other international, regional and national instruments against this menace. We need to tighten the global legal regime. We need a comprehensive convention in which the international community can identify terrorism as a crime against humanity.

The Philippine delegation stands ready to support further initiatives in the United Nations to eradicate international terrorism. To show our political will and resolve, the United Nations should begin seriously to explore at the highest political level a global strategy that will effectively deal with this problem.

In this regard, we must bear in mind that curing the symptoms alone will not suffice; we need to address the conditions that spawn and permit the growth of terrorism and hatred. It is also important to strengthen international coordination on related issues, such as the sharing of intelligence, coordinated police actions, combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

It is without equivocation that the Philippines will extend full support to our common fight for democracy, freedom and justice. Terrorists wish to instigate a religious war. The terrorists who pose as Muslims have been denounced by true Muslims as traitors to the teachings of the Koran. Islam is a religion of peace, forbearance and tolerance. We must make this an opportunity to forge religious understanding, ecumenism and solidarity. As we do so, we must broaden inter-faith dialogue to promote Christian and Muslim solidarity.

We should and shall fight terrorism together until it is eradicated.

**Mr. Pfanzelter** (Austria): Three weeks ago, this city experienced horrendous terrorist attacks that shocked the world. The Austrian Government reaffirms its unequivocal condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, whatever its motives and origin. Terrorism constitutes a threat to internal and international security, to peaceful relations between States, to the development and functioning of institutions throughout the world and to the enjoyment of human rights. We confirm our steadfast determination to combat this evil. Terrorist attacks in whatever form, for whatever reason and by whoever committed are criminal, unjustifiable acts.

On behalf of the Austrian Government, I would like to take this opportunity to renew our deepest sympathies to the victims and their families and to express our total solidarity with our host city, New York, and our host country, the United States of America. 11 September was one of the darkest days in world history. It is now our common obligation not only to the victims, but also to future generations to demonstrate that we do not accept terrorism and that we stand up collectively against barbarism.

The events of 11 September have brought terrorism to the top of the international agenda. In looking for effective, long-term global solutions, the world turns to the United Nations for guidance and leadership. We all agree that the United Nations has so far lived up to these legitimate expectations. The responses of the Secretary-General, the Security Council and the General Assembly were immediate. Within 48 hours, resolutions strongly condemning the attacks and calling for action against the perpetrators, supporters and financiers of terror were adopted.

Last Friday, the Security Council adopted unanimously resolution 1373 (2001) to combat terrorism globally. That resolution demonstrates clearly the unity, solidarity and determination of the United

Nations in the fight against terrorism. Once implemented, the resolution will cut off terrorists from their various forms of support and facilitate global cooperation to defeat this threat to the peace and security of our nations.

The activity of the Security Council has been complemented and supported forcefully by the General Assembly. The scheduling of this plenary debate in the General Assembly demonstrates the absolute priority the family of nations gives to this issue. Again, the sense of unity, solidarity and determination to act is overwhelming. This debate proves our commitment to taking measures for the immediate future to counter terrorism and to eliminate its roots, motives, resources and support. We are looking forward to a statement or draft resolution by the President of the General Assembly to give clear direction to the work ahead of us.

Let me take this opportunity to identify the measures which, from an Austrian perspective, are now essential in the global response to terrorism.

First, all States must implement without delay Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) of 28 September 2001, in close cooperation with the Security Council. Resolution 1373 (2001) is a powerful instrument and must be applied prudently and responsibly by all States.

Secondly, all States that have not yet done so should sign, ratify and implement the existing universal Conventions against Terrorism. I am pleased to announce in this respect that Austria, by signing the 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism on 24 September 2001, has now signed all 12 universal conventions endorsed by the United Nations. The other 11 conventions have already been ratified by the Austrian Parliament and we will ratify the Convention on the financing of terrorism very soon.

Thirdly, all States should redouble their efforts to find consensus on the Indian-sponsored project of a comprehensive convention against terrorism. As the Secretary-General so rightly pointed out in his statement yesterday, the necessity for legal precision must not stand in the way of moral clarity, which requires that we recognize no excuse whatsoever for taking innocent civilian life.

Fourthly, during this session of the General Assembly, the Sixth Committee must attach the highest priority to agenda item 166 and ensure that the draft resolution on terrorism incorporates the important developments in the United Nations that have occurred since the tragic events of 11 September.

Fifthly — and this is a very important point — the United Nations must pay particular attention to the broader aspects of the fight against terrorism, especially to the root causes, and contribute to a frank and inclusive dialogue between and within civilizations. The United Nations is the ideal organization to meet this challenge and to develop comprehensive strategies based on the multitude of existing initiatives and projects in this field. One such initiative, which Austria supported from the beginning, is the dialogue among civilizations. Just a few weeks ago, at the Salzburg Dialogue among Civilizations, new paradigms of international relations were discussed. There was consensus that additional efforts to counter intolerance and violence based on religion or belief were needed. Without any doubt, the dialogue among civilizations and other initiatives against intolerance are more relevant today than ever before.

Sixthly, in paragraph 4 of resolution 1373 (2001), the Security Council emphasizes the connection between international terrorism and transnational organized crime, illicit drugs and other illegal activities. In this context, we welcome the statements of numerous delegations that have referred to the Centre for International Crime Prevention in Vienna.

Delegations will be aware that, only one week before the terrorist attacks of 11 September, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice adopted, by consensus, the Plans of Action for the implementation of the Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice. In chapter VII of that document, specific national and international measures against terrorism are recommended.

The Centre for International Crime Prevention is thereby mandated to take steps to raise awareness of the relevant international instruments and encourage States to sign and ratify such instruments; to take measures to raise public awareness of the nature and scope of international terrorism and its relationship to crime, including organized crime; to continue to maintain existing databases on terrorism; to offer analytical support by collecting and disseminating

information on the relationship between terrorism and related criminal activities; and to draw up concrete proposals to strengthen its capacity to develop and administer the terrorism prevention component of its activities.

With these Vienna Plans of Action, the Centre for International Crime Prevention and its Terrorism Prevention Branch have received a focused mandate, which can serve as a solid basis for enhancing the capabilities of the United Nations in the prevention of terrorism. The substantial changes in national legislation required by Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) constitute a concrete example of a case in which the Terrorism Prevention Branch could immediately provide assistance to States. To this end, its personal and financial resources will have to be strengthened significantly. Taking into account the urgency of focused United Nations action, Austria will make a substantial contribution to help the Terrorism Prevention Branch in its efforts to assist States with the implementation of conventions against terrorism. We hope that other countries will follow suit in providing financial and other support to the Centre in Vienna. As a further initiative, Austria will host a workshop on how to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations by adopting a comprehensive approach in its fight against terrorism.

Finally, all States must support the efforts of the United Nations by adopting additional measures at the national level. In this regard, Austria will be guided by the conclusions of the European Council meeting on 21 September 2001. Last week, the Austrian Government complemented that package of European counter-terrorism policies with a comprehensive national Action Plan on combating terrorist networks, which includes provisions to enhance cooperation between States and their law-enforcement agencies, to share information and intelligence, to track down terrorists' assets and to suppress the financial support of terrorist groups.

In conclusion, let me stress once more that terrorism is an attack on humanity — on our values and our freedom. The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action on human rights stipulate that acts, methods and practices of terrorism are activities aimed at the destruction of human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy. It is our solemn duty to defend these cornerstones of our common humanity and to combat terrorism wherever it occurs. We owe this not only to the victims of terrorism, but to all of our citizens and future generations, who deserve to live in a free, safe and peaceful world.

**Mr. Ould Deddach** (Mauritania) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset, until a more authoritative voice can do so, to congratulate Mr. Han on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session and to assure him of the full cooperation of the delegation of Mauritania.

I should also like to express to the people and the Government of the United States of America and to the city of New York, which affords our Organization such generous hospitality, the condolences of our delegation as well as of the Government and the people of Mauritania.

The world is today facing a multiplicity of situations and problems whose consequences go beyond borders and threaten peace and security at the national, regional and international level. They thus jeopardize the progress that has been made towards economic and social development. Terrorism is one of the most contemptible manifestations of these various problems. The recent events have served as a summons to the international community, which must fight terrorism with all the legal means that the human conscience will allow.

That is why, in the context of this tragedy, my country, which has always condemned and fought against terrorism, would like to reaffirm today more strongly than ever our condemnation of terrorism, whatever its origin and whatever form it takes. In this connection, we also call upon the international community to strengthen cooperation and coordination so that it can resolutely and forcefully combat this scourge. Furthermore, our Government has included the struggle against terrorism among its chief policy objectives, in the knowledge that only stability based upon the rule of law will allow for the harmonious development of our country.

The hateful crimes that were committed recently in front of our very eyes against the United States of America have been rightly condemned by the entire international community, which has, for once, spoken with unanimity. The Government and the people of Mauritania, shocked by such unjustifiable atrocities, immediately and unreservedly condemned those barbarous acts and expressed their sympathy and

support to the grieving American Government and people at this exceptional time.

Our Government, of course, subscribes without reservation to Security Council resolutions 1368 (2001) of 12 September and 1373 (2001) of 28 September and we endorsed the General Assembly resolution of 12 September that condemned the terrorist attack on the United States. I should like to reaffirm to the Assembly the resolute will of the Mauritanian Government to fully implement the provisions of Security Council 1373 (2001). I should like to recall once again that that resolution fully accords with our Government's desire, expressed in the General Assembly, for the international community to commit itself to concerted and resolute action to effectively fight terrorism.

Furthermore, in this regard, our Government has taken an active part in all regional and international initiatives aimed at jointly combating the phenomenon of terrorism. To this end, we have lost no time in signing and ratifying certain legal instruments relative to the prevention and suppression of international terrorism. The international community can thus rest assured that in its struggle to totally eradicate terrorism it can count on the full cooperation of my country.

**Mr. MacKay** (New Zealand): We welcome this debate at an early stage of this General Assembly session, particularly as the general debate has been postponed.

May I again, on behalf of all New Zealanders, express our deepest sympathy to the families of the victims of the attacks of 11 September, and to President George W. Bush and the Government and people of the United States. We also pay tribute to Mayor Giuliani for his inspirational leadership during these saddest of days for this great city, and to its resilient people of so many races and faiths.

Three weeks ago we witnessed acts of callous and brutal mass murder. The terrorist attacks here in our host city, in Washington, D.C., and in Pennsylvania killed many thousands of innocent people, men and women, young and old, even infants. No cause can justify these horrors, which were so meticulously planned, coordinated, well funded and intended to attack the heart of our society. Those who assisted in any way with this evil should know that they have put themselves beyond the boundaries of civilized behaviour and humanity. None of us, acting alone, can eradicate this scourge. Because its ramifications are truly global, the foundations for an enduring response must be laid as broadly as possible by the international community, and this Organization should command a role bestowed cooperatively and effectively by all Governments.

Since 11 September the General Assembly has adopted resolution 56/1, which, among other things, stressed the accountability of those responsible for aiding, supporting or harbouring the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of terrorist acts. And the Security Council has adopted two strong resolutions, resolutions 1368 (2001) and 1373 (2001), which together require every one of us to implement a wide range of measures to prevent and suppress such acts. The question now is what further value the General Assembly can add under the current item and through its Ad Hoc Committee on terrorism and the Working Group.

Member States have previously made commitments in the General Assembly to tackle international terrorism, notably in the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism (resolution 49/60, annex). This Declaration, which elaborates on the application of the United Nations Charter to terrorist acts, strengthens the moral and legal foundations for international action against terrorism.

New Zealand is convinced that international legal instruments are a key element in combating international terrorism. The existing 12 international treaties provide a strong framework for action and cooperation at the national and international level. All States should become party to them as a matter of priority. We ourselves are attempting to fast-track our domestic processes for becoming party to the terrorist bombing Convention and for ratifying the terrorist financing Convention, in response to the events of 11 September.

But possible gaps remain in that international framework, for example, in relation to the threshold for what is an "international" terrorist act. There are also questions, possibly, about how far the Conventions extend to attacks on private facilities. My Government believes there is scope for more robust mechanisms for cooperation on the detection, prevention and investigation of terrorist acts than is found in some of the earlier Conventions. We should also consider as a matter of urgency the need for a comprehensive terrorism convention when the working group meets

later this month. Such a convention might seek to cover the gaps in existing instruments, while being careful to avoid undermining or weakening them.

It goes without saying also that international agreements must be rigorously enforced by Member States. Terrorists must be deprived of training, funding, support and shelter. Those States which assist or even knowingly tolerate the presence of international terrorists on their soil will have to face the consequences.

The United Nations can contribute to the fight against terrorism in many practical ways, including by addressing the underlying causes of injustice that give rise to the killing of civilians all over the world — in Europe and Asia, as well as the Middle East. It is important to try to address the alienation of the young in situations of economic deprivation and political tension and uncertainty so that they do not, through a sense of injustice and lack of hope, become fertile ground for terrorist recruitment.

The United Nations contribution can also involve information collection and exchange and technical advice in best practice methods and technologies for combating terrorism. The efforts of the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the Centre for International Crime Prevention, as well as the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) continue to be very important. They deserve enhanced political and financial support.

The battle against terrorism must be fought on many fronts, because it is a complex phenomenon. Measures to halt the illicit trade in narcotics and small arms and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are all part of the struggle. So are steps to improve aviation security, to prevent money-laundering and to ensure the safety of hazardous — including chemical and biological — materials.

The alarm sounded on 11 September. We must collectively confront the brutal and ruthless forces which drive international terrorism and ensure that the international community is protected in future from terrorist acts.

Finally, like many who have spoken previously, New Zealand is deeply concerned at the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, which has been exacerbated by the terrorist attacks of 11 September. I am pleased to announce that on 1 October the New Zealand Government decided to provide a contribution of 1 million New Zealand dollars to the United Nations Consolidated Appeal for Afghanistan.

**Mr. Shobokshi** (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): The disgraceful terrorist acts committed against the United States on 11 September 2001 were, by any standards, ugly crimes. They should be condemned by every person with a grain of faith, and by all peace-loving peoples who believe in human rights and uphold principles and values.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, its monarch, Government and people have condemned the criminal acts that resulted in great loss of life, tremendous destruction and property damage. The Government has issued a declaration condemning this criminal act as contrary to all religious values and humanitarian cultural concepts. The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques sent the President of the United States of America a message in which he underlined his strong denunciation and condemnation of such acts. His Majesty also conveyed his sincere condolences to the families of the victims and to the friendly people of America. He confirmed Saudi Arabia's solidarity with the international community in confronting terrorism and fighting it in all its forms and manifestations. In a telephone conversation, His Royal Highness, the Crown Prince, First Deputy Prime Minister and Commander of the National Guard, conveyed his condolences to the President of the United States and to the American people for the fallen victims of these painful acts of terrorism, acts condemned and rejected by all religious faiths. Prince Abdullah expressed Saudi Arabia's complete readiness to cooperate with the American Government in all its efforts to uncover the identities of the perpetrators and to bring them to justice.

Condemnation of these criminal terrorist acts was not limited to the official authorities; it included all segments of Saudi society. The Grand Mufti — the chief Islamic jurist in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Chairman of the Senior Ulema, Islamic scholars — affirmed that the explosions that took place in the United States, the plane hijackings that frightened peaceful people, or unjustly killed people, were forms of aggression and oppression that Islamic law does not condone. Indeed, it considers them a major sin.

The Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council in the Kingdom affirmed that the horrific, barbaric act that took place in the United States was beyond comprehension. Scenes of the carnage were beyond what any Muslim mind could accept or comprehend. He added that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, home to the Two Holy Mosques and governed by the teachings of Islam, condemned those brutal acts. So it is no wonder that the Kingdom considers it anathema for Muslims to commit such deeds or protect such criminals. He said that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia had declared, through its religious leaders, before any Saudi aircraft was ever hijacked, that such acts were criminal, regardless of whether the passengers were Muslim or not. They considered such acts to be oppressive and said that aggression and terror against people were among the greatest of sins.

While my country denounces this inhumane terrorist act, it also emphasizes the need to avoid linking terrorist acts with any particular religion or ethnic group, whether such linkage is made by Government bodies or the news media. Such linkage would not help in effectively combating terrorism, and is an affront to truth and reality. Saudi Arabia is concerned about the attempts of some news media and politicians to exploit this tragedy in order to arbitrarily accuse Islam and Muslims. Islam is absolutely innocent of such criminal acts; they are gross and flagrant violations of Islamic values and moral principles.

My country is deeply concerned about certain widespread phenomena in some societies that aim to discriminate against religious beliefs, especially Islam. There is also an attempt to link Islam with some negative phenomena, such as terrorism and fanaticism, forgetting that Islam rejects these anomalies, while it promotes tolerance and cooperation.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has suffered from terrorist acts in the past. Therefore, it sympathizes with what the United States is going through now. The Kingdom has exerted sustained efforts for a long time to combat this dangerous phenomenon. We have taken appropriate measures on all levels. At the national level, we have enacted laws that punish perpetrators of terrorist acts. Combating terrorism became a principal subject in the curriculum of our colleges and universities. At the regional level, the Kingdom was among the first signatories of the pan-Arab Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, which was adopted by the League of Arab States in 1998. It also signed the anti-terrorism Convention of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. At the international level, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has acceded to numerous United Nations Conventions relating to terrorism. These include the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation — the Montreal Convention. The Kingdom is well on its way to acceding to or signing the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and the Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.

My Government believes that accession to anti-terrorism conventions should be accompanied by sincere and serious intentions to combat this dangerous phenomenon and eradicate it. We call upon all Member States to categorically condemn all terrorist acts that constitute a grave violation of the purposes and principles of the United Nations, threaten international peace and security and endanger friendly relations among States, as well as impede cooperation among them.

Concerned about this pernicious scourge, and being fully determined to combat it, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia supports all efforts by our Organization through its relevant resolutions and conventions, particularly Security Council resolutions 1368 (2001) and 1373 (2001), both of which condemn categorically and in the strongest terms the horrible terrorist attacks that took place in the United States of America.

My country's delegation, in its efforts to combat this dangerous phenomenon, supports the convening of an international conference on terrorism. We believe that the need is urgent and that the time has come to convene such a conference. It should have as one of its main objectives an accurate definition of terrorism that differentiates between terrorism as a dangerous phenomenon posing a threat to the security and stability of the international community and the right of peoples to struggle against and resist occupation, according to international law and the United Nations Charter.

Although the Arab and Muslim peoples are targets of terrorist acts, there are vicious attempts to falsely accuse Arabs and Muslims of terrorism. Some biased media repeat unjust hearsay about Islamic terrorism, an Islamic threat and an Islamic bomb. It is as if only Muslims commit terrorism. We have not heard or read that bombs have religions and terrorism

has religious sects. Nobody would repeat such lies unless he or she was arrogant, malicious or ignorant of history. Arabs and Muslims cannot be accused of terrorism because some person or a group from among them commits terrorist acts. Terrorists are found among every sect and religion and in all human societies. Islam prohibits terrorism because God Almighty cannot be but just and He forbids injustice against human beings.

God criminalizes oppression and aggression against non-criminals. Killing the innocent is a major sin; it is considered similar to perversion on Earth and destruction of crops and progeny. God Almighty says,

"Let not
The hatred of others
To you make you swerve
To wrong and depart from
justice. Be just: that is
Next to piety." (*Holy Koran. V:8*)

Islam considers inflicting collective punishment an act of abomination, aggression and wickedness. Islamic law was aware of this danger 14 centuries ago. It established the first complete law against terrorism. Thus, Islamic jurisprudence considers oppression and banditry as forms of terrorism. The Supreme Judicial Council in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia imposed capital punishment on those who committed crimes of terrorism and sabotage. This was based on God's words in the Holy Quran:

"There is the type of man
Whose speech
About this world's life
May dazzle thee,
And he calls Allah to witness
About what is in his heart;
Yet is he the most contentious
of enemies.
When he turns his back,
His aim everywhere
Is to spread mischief
Through the earth and destroy
Crops and progeny
But Allah loveth no mischief."
(*Holy Koran. II:204, 205*)

God Almighty says again,

"That if any one slew
A person — unless it be
For murder or for spreading
Mischief in the land —
It would be as if
He slew the whole people." (*Holy Koran. V:32*)

Arab Governments and peoples condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. This position is based on their faith and culture. Nevertheless, the Arabs call for avoiding any confusion between terrorism and the right of people to defend their independence, freedom and human rights when they are subject to foreign occupation, dominance and oppression, which are violations of international law and norms of conduct.

General condemnation of terrorism necessarily extends to State terrorism, as practised by Israel continuously against the Palestinian people. Paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 40/61, adopted at the fortieth session in 1985, referred to official terrorism practised by some States. This resolution makes a clear distinction between terrorism, which is a criminal act and an unlawful form of warfare, and armed resistance to colonialism, racism and foreign occupation, which is a legitimate struggle based on the principle of self-determination, which is embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, international law and other international resolutions. In paragraph 9, the resolution calls upon all Member States to work, individually, collaboratively and with relevant United Nations organs, towards the gradual elimination of the causes of international terrorism.

There is no doubt that States where terrorist acts take place have the right to pursue the wrongdoers, arrest them and put them on trial. The objective should be to eradicate all forms and manifestations of terrorism not to exact revenge on the people. The history of terrorism shows us that the best way to suppress it is to explore its roots, identify the causes that engender it and find just solutions to the various conflicts.

What happened in the United States places great responsibilities before the international community. Terrorism was not born on 11 September 2001 and will not be eradicated by military and security means alone. It requires concerted efforts by the international community to use all means available to fight this evil.

The international community is required to deal with terrorism in all its aspects in a spirit of responsibility and seriousness. The best context for

such action is the United Nations, which embodies the international community. It alone is entitled to define terrorism and to make international decisions to fight it. International law should be the basis for dealing with terrorism and for deciding what measures to take against it. The mere use of force could lead to the arrest of a few suspects while inflicting mass pain and suffering on multitudes of innocent people.

In confronting terrorism, international cooperation in facing terrorism requires an agreed definition of the phenomenon in legal terms, not a whimsical definition based on personal interests and objectives. All faiths, creeds and values must be respected and cannot be tarnished under the pretext of defending freedom of speech. Human rights issues should not be politicized, and attempts to impose on other nations values that might contradict their beliefs and principles should cease. No double standards should be used in dealing with international problems. Therefore, international laws and legitimacy should be respected.

Terrorism has become a universal phenomenon that is not limited to one ethnic group, people or faith. It exists in every culture and in almost all States. Combating it also needs to be universal in nature and extent. Only through a coordinated plan in the context of the United Nations can our common efforts bear fruit, eradicate terrorism, protect the lives of the innocent, maintain the sovereignty of States and the security and stability of the world.

**Mr. Al-Hinai** (Oman) (*spoke in Arabic*): The General Assembly is meeting today to discuss a matter of utmost importance and seriousness: measures to eliminate international terrorism, which coincides with present incidents and world developments that have never before been witnessed. The world was shocked by the events of 11 September, and my Government was stunned and deeply saddened by the terrorist attacks that took place in Washington, D.C., New York and Pennsylvania and the resulting human and material losses.

My Government, while condemning these terrible acts, is confident that the American people will overcome the suffering resulting from these terrorist acts. Expressing its complete solidarity with the United States, my Government fully believes that justice will be served on those who perpetrated these attacks, and that the international community would undoubtedly stand with the United States to preserve the peace and security of all peoples in the world in a more transparent manner.

I am greatly honoured in this context to quote His Majesty the great Sultan, may God preserve him, in his opening address at the regular session of the Council of Oman on Tuesday, 25 September 2001, at which His Majesty said:

> "In foreign policy, the basic principle is to stand on the side of truth and justice and of the strengthening of brotherhood and bonds of friendship, and to participate in ensuring international security and peace. We are confident that the establishment and maintenance of peace in the world are essential for the benefit of all mankind. Peace can be maintained among all nations of the world only when it is founded on a solid basis of justice, cooperation and understanding among all countries. We are convinced that all forms and manifestations of terrorism, and from whatever source, are an attack against peace, which is so cherished by all of mankind, and against international peace and security, which we seek with other nations to consolidate. Proceeding from this — as we have always done throughout our blessed renaissance — we condemn and reject terrorism. We call upon all to counter terrorism and remedy its causes."

In the light of these developments, it has become clear that terrorism is a world phenomenon that knows no borders and is not confined to specific geographical locations. On the contrary, its activities are widely spread, come in numerous forms, and reach countries and peoples all over the world — especially with today's increasing tendency towards globalization and the attendant increase in the technological abilities to transcend borders in an unprecedented manner. We must, therefore, find the means to prevent this danger and root it out, so that terrorism is not allowed the opportunity to wreak havoc on the resources of nations and so that peace and prosperity may prevail in all parts of the world.

Firmly convinced of the danger of terrorism and its negative effects on international peace and security, my Government believes that combating this phenomenon can only be achieved through concerted international efforts and strengthening cooperation

among States. My country has joined numerous conventions relevant to combating this phenomenon. And in this context, my delegation feels that attempts to combat terrorism will only succeed through the commitment of all States to the principles and provisions of international law and the Charter of the United Nations and through firm resolve in standing up to terrorism. This requires placing importance on monitoring the implementation of all provisions of relevant international conventions, especially given that this phenomenon could become more dangerous and complicated in the light of the resurgence of extremist tendencies, whether they be national, ethnic, religious or doctrinal.

My delegation also calls for the non-use of double standards in dealing with terrorist acts. It also calls on States not to confuse such activities with the right of peoples to struggle against occupation and to defend their land, because such a struggle is a right guaranteed under international law. At the same time, we reaffirm that the principles of Islam and the teachings of its tolerant shariah call for tolerance and for the renunciation of all forms of violence, terrorism and extremism. My delegation calls for the renunciation of any link between terrorism and Islam, so that this war against terrorism not be transformed into a conflict among religions and civilizations.

While my delegation supports the efforts exerted to combat the phenomenon of terrorism, we hope that such efforts will not discourage the international community from continuing its endeavours to find final and equitable solutions to numerous chronic questions. Foremost among them is the Palestinian question and the Arab-Israeli conflict, especially in the light of the increased acts of violence by Israeli forces against the unarmed Palestinian people, using the preoccupation of world public opinion with the developments unfolding on the international arena.

Finally, my delegation, while reaffirming its condemnation of terrorism, believes that it is of the utmost importance that an international conference be held on terrorism, with the aim of considering the views and proposals of countries, and in the hope of eradicating this international scourge. We also reaffirm the importance of concerted international efforts to combat terrorism within the scope of international law and under the umbrella of the United Nations so that such efforts can be crowned with the desired success.

**Mr. Olhaye** (Djibouti): Let me begin by expressing Djibouti's deepest and most profound sympathies to the Government and people of the United States of America and to other nations and people directly affected by the tragic events on 11 September.

The Government and the people of Djibouti swiftly and unreservedly condemned the terrorist attacks that took place in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania on 11 September, and we vehemently expressed our revulsion at such ghastly and evil acts perpetrated against innocent civilians. The resolve of the international community was, and continues to be, unanimous, as demonstrated by the overwhelming and instant reactions and decisive resolutions taken by the Security Council and the General Assembly. As stated by the American Red Cross, "Disasters create an abrupt change in reality".

Indeed, we are living in a new reality. We need to coalesce and fashion together new approaches to international peace, security and stability. We welcome the timely Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), adopted last Friday, which demands that all countries deny safe haven to terrorists, sever financial, political and military ties with terrorist organizations and freeze their assets everywhere.

The action by the Security Council last Friday, and the decision by the General Assembly to hold this crucial meeting — both in the aftermath of those deliberate and deadly attacks carried out against the United States — clearly underscore the emerging international determination and solidarity to fight terrorism. What happened on 11 September was mass murder against innocent people of all nationalities, faiths and walks of life. We are all touched. For most of us this could be the most dramatic thing that has happened in our lifetime. We are all still in a state of shock and disbelief. As one doctor, overwhelmed by the degree of the carnage, put it, there is a limit to what the mind can take.

As so many have accurately described, 11 September was truly the day the world changed. The sheer heroism, selflessness and tireless efforts by so many, including average New Yorkers and Washingtonians desperately seeking to save those caught in the maelstrom, will forever form an indelible and inspiring memory in the hearts of mankind. It will

take us months, if not years, to fathom what has happened. We are all changed by this calamity.

As nations and peoples, we have all suffered from terrorism at one time or another. In fact, many of us still do, in the form of either domestic terrorism or international terrorism. Djibouti suffered from terrorism. It has also cared for victims of calamities and terrorism in other countries — the last instance involved the victims of the attack on the *USS Cole*, in Aden. But it is perplexing how a terrorist group could turn aeroplanes into missiles and master the training, logistics and coordination required to execute such a sinister plot. How they could do that for years without being detected boggles the imagination. The sheer magnitude of this level of terrorism, its sophistication and its chosen instruments send a signal to the world that a new day has indeed begun.

While the Al Qaeda group, under the control of Osama bin Laden, is suspected to be the perpetrator, the reality of terrorism goes far beyond any particular border, faith, creed or political system. In the case of the attack on America there was obviously a large, international network, huge hoards of cash and sufficient time and patience to target several American national symbols for simultaneous destruction. Terror on this scale was inconceivable, unseen and unheard of.

Given the sheer magnitude of these heinous acts of terrorism, the toll in human tragedy and the material and moral damage inflicted, we are today all united to work together to eliminate terrorism. However, the commitment to eradicate or contain terrorism — which is an ominous threat to peace, stability and security everywhere — is beyond the capacity of any one country.

The response of the Taliban movement in Afghanistan has so far been unclear, and at times contradictory to the direction of the Security Council, which in its earlier resolutions demanded the handing over of the main suspect and the closing of all clandestine training camps in the territories under its control. We strongly urge them to comply with all Security Council resolutions, including the latest one adopted on Friday, so that the question of bin Laden's guilt or innocence can be judiciously established prior to the commencement of any hostilities in their country.

The people of that wretched country, Afghanistan, are once again gripped by desperation and fear as they flee the cities and towns because of the potential threat of attacks. A major disaster is shaping up. Millions of refugees are leaving the country, and millions are facing starvation inside the country. The situation is so serious that no one can say with certainty what the extent of the looming crisis will be, given the impending strikes, severe food shortage, removal of international aid workers and the closure of borders by all the neighbouring countries. We laud the efforts of the Secretary-General to enhance international awareness about the plight of the Afghan people and to prepare the ground for the impending exodus. His appeal for urgent humanitarian assistance needs to be seriously heeded by the international community.

While these unprecedented attacks took place here in the United States, there is widespread concern that the next attack could be almost anywhere, with the possibility of multiple strikes. Such a possibility underscores the need for collective, coordinated international preparedness and response. In such situations separate and unilateral responses will be ineffective, cumbersome and impossible to carry out unless there is a suitable international mechanism in place. The sophisticated movement and training of people, communications, funds and materiel require a robust system of surveillance and monitoring.

We therefore concur with the Secretary-General in calling for a central role for the United Nations. The Organization provides the forum necessary for building a universal coalition and, equally important, ensures global legitimacy for the medium- to long-term response to terrorism. Additionally, there are a dozen international conventions and protocols in existence designed to address different facets of terrorism. They need to be looked at all over again with a view to harmonizing and streamlining them. International cooperation cannot be seen as a formality, a rubber stamp, a routine, or a one-way street in which everyone is expected to comply, with the exception of a few.

Terrorism of course does not exist in a vacuum. Therefore, beyond the issue of acts of terrorism and what must be done to prevent them, we need to focus on the deep root causes and their accompanying attitudes, frustrations and attendant economic and political conditions. We need to examine the possible association with poverty, marginalization, economic

decline, political oppression, denial and repression. We must direct extraordinary efforts toward resolving intractable conflicts, particularly the Palestinian question, which, without a doubt, is the breeding ground for most manifestations of ill will, disenchantment and despair.

If the new global order means anything to huge sectors of mankind, and if terrorism is to be contained — if not prevented — then we must begin to deal with the possible underlying causes in an earnest way. We cannot afford to brush them aside forever.

If, however, we fail to find the time and patience needed to examine them seriously, then the world will indeed change, and not for the better. It need not be so; it cannot be so. That seems to be the message contained in the recent action of the Security Council, and the meaning of this extraordinary series of General Assembly meetings on terrorism. If in the end we are successful, even in a small way, in containing the evil phenomenon of terrorism, it will at least represent something positive emanating from the terrible tragedy in the United States.

Finally, I wish to state again that the Government and the people of Djibouti firmly and explicitly stand with the United States of America in particular and with the international community in general in fighting terrorism.

**Mr. Dangue Réwaka** (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): The terrorist acts perpetrated on United States soil on 11 September 2001 strikingly remind us of the urgent need for the international community to adopt a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. To be sure, today's item, entitled "Measures to eliminate international terrorism", has been on the Assembly's agenda since 1972, but work towards the formulation and adoption of a binding international legal instrument on this subject still remains to be done. The numerous existing conventions on the suppression of acts of terrorism can be useful reference points here. In my view, completion of this task would honour the memory of innocent victims of acts of terrorism worldwide.

At this solemn time my thoughts naturally go first to all the victims whose precious lives were callously destroyed before the stunned and powerless eyes of millions of television viewers on all continents on that day of infamy, 11 September 2001.

Let me reaffirm the position of my country on this item. Gabon most firmly and unreservedly condemns terrorism in all its forms. Because it violates the fundamental right of every human being to life, because it arbitrarily and indiscriminately strikes innocent victims and because it feeds on the terror that it spawns, terrorism poses a genuine, grave threat to peace and security both for individuals and for nations.

Let us make no mistake. Because of the myriad threats it poses and its evil consequences in every sphere of international relations, including global economic relations, there must be broad international cooperation to put an end to terrorism, its ramifications and the support from which it benefits. For its part, Gabon is determined to join the rest of the international community in all agreed initiatives to deal with this qualitatively new scourge. Our services are ready to cooperate with those of all other countries to that end, for in the name of what cause could one reasonably justify the perpetration of large-scale terrorist crimes? How can we accept, without renouncing universal human ethics, that the end can always and everywhere justify recourse to such extreme means? That is why we are convinced of the need to accelerate the process of negotiations in the General Assembly's Ad Hoc Committee to draft a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

We can already welcome the consensus that has formed on the need for an effective international anti-terrorism regime. Here, the international community must act with dispatch and with unity. It is necessary and of the highest priority to search for effective responses sufficient to slay this modern-day dragon. The international community must now therefore focus on this issue — but without omitting discussion of questions of substance. We would hope to gain understanding so as to be able to take better action, but without engaging in justification. We need to understand in order better to restore the balance that may have been disturbed.

We must therefore focus on this subject in a framework that is not only political, but also scientific — analytical and multisectoral — thus making it possible to attain a unified view of terrorism from all perspectives. Such a unified viewpoint can result only from a comprehensive approach to the subject. Here, we hail the international community's efforts thus far, both in the General Assembly and in the Security Council.

But we must note that the solutions proposed to date have been fragmentary or limited. Their political nature has a considerable effect on their expected effectiveness, because they consistently depend on our various national legal systems for implementation. Our States have different legal systems, apart from the fact that they have freedom with respect to endorsing the recommendations of the international community. This raises the question of the effectiveness of existing measures aimed at eradicating terrorism.

In the present context, the international community must spare no effort to study terrorism in depth. It is now or never: the international community must adopt a coherent, practicable legal framework that would address the entire structure of terrorism, from fact-finding to framing legal definitions to punishment. To that end, a commonly accepted definition is needed, and we must articulate all the elements of the legal framework for the international community's suppression of acts of terrorism.

The General Assembly could convene a special session for the definition of terrorism and could also request the International Law Commission to devote one of its upcoming sessions exclusively to the technical aspects of a system for the suppression of terrorism.

*The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.*